

**ABSTRACT****IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO THE SIMULTANEOUS PURCHASING  
AND SELLING OF GOODS AND SERVICES IN AUCTIONS**

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A method of determining a bidding strategy for the simultaneous purchase of at least one individual service component (34) from one or more forward auctions (22a,22b), and the provision of a composite service (36) requested by a reverse auction (20), is described. The method comprises: identifying forward auctions (22a,22b) selling the at least one individual  
10 service component (34); identifying a reverse auction (20) requesting a composite service (36) comprising the at least one service component (34); determining a plurality of possible combinations of the identified forward (22a,22b) and reverse auctions (20); estimating the expected benefit of bidding in each of the plurality of possible combination of auctions (20,22a,22b) by use of likelihood models (44), wherein each likelihood model (44) establishes  
15 the likelihood of a particular bid succeeding in a given auction; and selecting the combination of auctions to increase the expected benefit for use as the bidding strategy.

(Figure 1)